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9/15/66

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Washburn and
Mr. Rutherford

Your letterm of the 13th is kind and helpful and we appreciate it very much. Today we sent you a package of 54 copies of WHITEWASH with an invoice for your records and ours that I will here explain.

We have had to learn and are observing the norms of the publishing business. Your kind offer puts you in the position of a wholesaler, and he makes a profit. Also, although you said you thought you could sell 50, because we have to improvise our packaging, the box of the closest size made a safer package with the 4 extra books. These need not concern you, for the strangeways of publishing mean that a sale is not really a sale anyway. Generally the publisher is paid promptly (in this we also seem to be the exception), but the usual terms of the sale, called "protected", mean that the wholesaler can return the unsold books for credit.

The discount to the wholesaler is 50%. He in turn grants discounts that vary. Those we grant are normal for hardback books. The wholesalers and book stores pay the postage, including insurance unless otherwise specified. Postage was $2.80, insurance 50¢. We added special delivery because of what you said, but this was our option and not your responsibility, so do not add this to the invoice. Add only the $3.30. While we could not afford to have WHITEWASH set in type, except that the cover is soft, it is a more costly book than the usual softbacked one. It has a hardbacked stitched binding and best-grade 60lb paper, etc. These are among the things that increase its cost.

The invoice indicates the normal store discounts. Also neklosed inx the package is a handfull of flyers we had made noting some of the mentions and including a coupon. We have more of these if you can use them.

Unfortunately, there is little enterprizing about the book wholesaling business. That is why the book stores do not know of WHITEWASH. We supplied each of the dealers with prefolded copies of the flyer with their names and phone numbers, for inclusion with their monthly billings. I have yet to hear of one being used.

We appreciate the check very much. While the book is now in its third printing, with 11,000 copies sold, the money is so slow coming in that we have paid only about a third of the second printing and are advancing all the other "publishing" costs from money we borrow to be able to pay the printer, who has been very kind and quite true to our dearly-held principles of freedom of the press, a refreshing and encouraging experience after our dismal history with book publishers. Whenever you have sold other copies and are paid for them, we can use the money. We do not expect you to advance it. At that you will probably be more prompt than the dealers, some of whom owe us money going back to June!

As you may know, WHITEWASH is the book that opened the field up. We are proud that it is the most complete book by far and, we think, the most responsible. You will find that it has no illiberal doctrine. It has been its own kind of success. It cannot be a financial succes , our costs have been that great. But we are happy in what it has done and the rare handicaps it has overcome. It actually made the front page of the Wall Street Journal several weeks ago.

None of this would have been possible if there had not always been someone of principle ready to help when help was needed, including the man who loaned me the money for the down payment to the printer. You also are helping in this way, and we do appreciate it.

I hope this letter is not incomprehensible. I have been too busy for too long and sometimes get too tired, as I am tonight. There will soon be a sequel. In addition to having tom perform the chores of a publisher, I am still a writer. The subject is not pleasant, not easy to live with, and rather technical. So, I'm writing when I'm too tired to, and I apologize if I am unclear. If you have any questions, please ask me.

We do thank you very much for your interest, even more for your willingness.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg